

*Revised Edition 17896.C.11*

THE  
ART  
OF *G--n (Bar--)*  
Composing Music

BY  
A Method entirely New,  
SUITED  
To the meanest Capacity.

Whereby all Difficulties are removed, and  
a Person who has made never so little  
Progress before, may, with some small  
Application, be enabled to excel.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for J. LION, in *Ludgate-Street,*  
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*Birmingham*





(vi)

THE  
PREFACE.

 *BOOK without a Preface, is like a Body without a Head: or a King without his Guards. Besides, Custom hath made it so necessary, that a Book is nothing without one; and is looked upon as an indispensable Ornament. A Gentleman would as soon buy a Horse without a Star in his Forehead, as a Scholar a Book without a Preface.*



But as Nature hath not furnished every Horse with this Beauty, an ingenious Dealer will supply the Want of it with an artificial one ; perhaps borrowed from the Skin of some other Animal. I hope, therefore, gentle Reader, that you will allow me (as I have not Matter of my own) to make use of the Words of a Brother Musician \*, on a like Occasion. “ The chief End I have in view, “ is to contribute, as far as my Abilities “ will permit, to the Perfection of an Art “ that I love, and to rescue the Character “ of Musician from the Disgrace and Con- “ tempt which the Follies of ignorant Pre- “ tenders have brought upon it : I hope no “ acknowledged Master will lend his Coun- “ tenance to the Misconstruction which those “ Pretenders may think their Interest to pass “ upon it. To say all in a few Words, the

\* Mr. Geminiani in his Treatise on good Taste in Music.



" Road to Emulation is both open and wide;  
 " the most effectual Method to triumph over  
 " an Author is to excel him; and he mani-  
 " fests his Affection to a Science most, who  
 " contributes most to its Advancement."

Thus far this Author's Words suit my  
 Purpose. But when he tells us, that "Thir-  
 " ty-four Years ago, he found Music in so  
 " thriving a State, that he had all the  
 " Reason imaginable to suppose the Growth  
 " would be suitable to the Excellency of the  
 " Soil: but that he has lived to be most  
 " miserably disappointed: that Encourage-  
 " ment hath been misapplied; the Hand  
 " more considered than the Head; the Per-  
 " formance than the Composition; and that  
 " instead of labouring to cultivate a Taste,  
 " which seemed to be all that was want-  
 " ing, the Public had been content to nourish  
 " Insipidity;" whoever peruses the follow-  
 " ing Sheets, will find we differ widely in our  
 Sentiments. For I flatter myself, I have

*sufficiently proved, that Music, instead of  
dwindling, hath been improving almost these  
last seventeen Years, and is now arrived at  
the utmost Degree of Perfection.*



THE



THE  
A R T  
O F  
Composing MUSIC.



*S* *Music* is become not only the Delight but the Practice also of most People of Fashion, and as *Italian Music* in particular beyond all other is countenanced and encouraged, I cannot but with the utmost Satisfaction, congratulate this my native Country thereupon.

*Music,*



*Musick*, till of late, has been thought a very difficult, abstruse Kind of Study : But then, every one knows *Musick* itself was not what it now is, nay, we ourselves are proportionably altered since then. And what is the Alteration owing to ? Truly, to this happy Relish of the pathetic Tenderneſs which breathes in every Strain of the modern *Italian Musick*. It would formerly have ſweated a Man in a froſty Morning, to have executed properly a Song or a Leſſon ; but the gentle Strains we now boaſt require no ſuch Labour.

There are remaining ſtill among us ſome indeed who contend for the more manly Strokes of *Handel* ; but alas ! I pity them. For why ſhould it not be in this Particular as in all other polite Things, where nothing is ſo much required as Eaſe and Negligence ?

As for your manly Things (as thoſe old-faſhioned Folks are pleaſed to call them) I hate and deteſt them ! For what can be more diſagreeable and impertinent, than when you  
are

are soothed and lulled into a pleasing *Reverie*, to be roused, to be awakened (if it be not too vulgar an Expression) by one of those manly Things? In my Opinion nothing could be more impertinent and unpolite; and therefore justly exploded by the modern Adepts.

There was a Time when the Man-Mountain, *Handel*, had got the Superiority, notwithstanding many Attempts had been made to keep him down; and might have maintained it probably, had he been content to have pleased People in their own Way; but his evil Genius would not suffer it: For he, imagining forsooth that nothing could obstruct him in his Career, whilst at the Zenith of his Greatness, broached another Kind of Music; more full, more grand (as his Admirers are pleased to call it, because crouded with Parts) and, to make the Noise the greater, caused it to be performed, by at least double the Number of Voices and Instruments than ever were heard in a Theatre before: In this, he not only thought to rival our Patron God, but others also; particularly *Æolus*,

*Ius*, *Neptune*, and *Jupiter* : For at one Time, I have expected the House to be blown down with his artificial Wind ; at another Time, that the Sea would have overflowed its Banks and swallowed us up : But beyond every thing, his Thunder was most intolerable——I shall never get the horrid Rumbling of it out of my Head——This was (literally you will say) taking us by Storm ; hah ! hah ! but mark the Consequence —— By this Attempt to personate *Apollo*, he shared the Fate of *Phaëton* ; *Heidegger* revolted, and with him most of the prime Nobility and Gentry. From this happy *Æra* we may date the Growth and Establishment of *Italian Music* in our Island : Then came the healing Balm of *Hasse* and *Vinci*, *Lampugnani*, *Piscetti*, *Gluck*, &c. &c.

Perhaps it will be asked by some of my Readers, what became of the old *German* ? Why, like a Giant thrown on his Back, he made vast Struggles to get up again, but in vain : In short, through a Conceit of his Merit, he supported an Opera at his own Expence,



Expende, frequently performing to a slender Audience of Citizens, and sometimes to little better than an empty House; whilst the other Theatre was constantly crouded; crouded with Nobility, and others of a more refined Taste (to their immortal Honour be it spoken) till in a short Time his Pockets were drained of the Thousands he had been nigh forty Years amassing, and *Farinelli's* (though a Singer only) filled with a Sum equal, if not greater, in one Season.

The Ladies, who are the sole Arbiters in Matters of this sort, would no longer be handled so roughly (although no Enemies to a manly Stroke, properly introduced and with Caution applied) but now Things went swimmingly on: Nothing would go down that was not of *Italian* Growth. It is true, few great Masters have continued with us long; but in lieu of that, our Friends abroad have furnished us with the Cullings of all the genuine Operas at *Rome, Naples, and Venice* \*;

\* In this Place, even the common Watermen excel in Music: And their little Sonnets have been the Ad-  
an

an inexhaustible Fund! for new Operas in those Places are daily produced; and no doubt, but such Pieces only as are agreeable to our Gusto, are sent over: This however I may venture to say, our Chusers are particularly careful in rejecting all such as have the least Appearance of Labour and Study in them: By this means, *Musick* is brought to such a Pitch of Perfection, and our Taste and Knowledge so much refined, that I have seen many Airs composed by Ladies and Men of Quality, equal to the most elegant Performances of the *Italian* Masters. Happy! thrice happy Nation! whose princely Sons are capable of such truly noble Atchievements.

Having thus far given you a Sketch of the State of *Musick* in general, I shall proceed to give some Account of it as to what concerns myself, and the valuable secret I am about to

miration of all the polite Part of his Majesty's Dominions; Witness the Sale of a Collection of them, published by Mr. *Walsh* (as I am informed) under the Direction of a noble Peer.

impart

impart : In which I shall be as brief as the Nature of the Subject will allow.

Know then, for thirty Years past I have made *Music* my principal Study and Practice. I had naturally an Inclination to it, from my Infancy, and embraced the first Opportunity that offered (which was while I served a late A——l in the Capacity of Butler) of purchasing a Violin: This Instrument I very soon made myself Master of. The next Purchase was an Harpsicord, which I studied with the like Success; insomuch, that I was made Organist of *Cb—sea*, which Place I hold to this Day, and supply by a Deputy; since my Residence is at least at an hundred Miles Distance.

My next Preferment was to the Place of Organist in the Cathedral of G——, where I resided some Years, and propagated *Music* (which till then they had been utter Strangers to) not only in that City, but many Miles round it, with indefatigable Pains and Industry; and no small Degree of Success: The  
Make



Make and Agility of my Body (which is of the smallest Size) fitted me for the one, my Method of Teaching (which is different from all other Masters) procured me the other.

Hitherto I have said nothing of my Skill in Composition, which I value myself more upon, than excelling on three Instruments. In my younger Days I sought out the best Means I could, of obtaining a competent Knowledge therein; I placed myself under the Direction of the learned Doctor P——, but the Doctor's Rules were rather too abstruse, too dry, and full of Labour, for one of my volatile Disposition: However, he had the Money and I had the Precepts; and made no small Advantage of them I assure you. For, whenever my Fundamentals were in the least questioned, the Doctor's Name occurred immediately; and his Rules ready to be produced. I talked as fluently of Hexachords, Solmifation, Counterpoint, &c. as if I had really understood them. But, between Friends the Doctor is too nice, too rigid

gid in his Principles of Harmony ; too strict in the Observance of Preparation and Resolution — too scrupulous about Accents, Fugues, Imitations, and the like — for what are all these but so many Clogs to a sprightly Genius? But as I said before, this Stuff is all laid aside. In short, I puzzled and perplexed myself about them a great while to little Purpose ; at length resolved to give them up entirely, which accordingly I did ; finding my own unerring Fancy to produce infinitely more charming Effects.

In the Course of my Practice, I have always taken Care (following the Example of *Italian* Masters) to perform, to teach, and to recommend none but my own Compositions (and that they are my own few will be so hardy to deny.) By this means I have brought my Scholars to a thorough Sense of my great Abilities, and the Inconsiderableness of those of all other Masters.

Succeeding thus in my private Capacity, I came to a Resolution to display my Talents  
more

more amply abroad ; I published ——— my Songs at this Day are in the Hands of Hundreds, who subscribed for them : As they will speak for themselves, I shall not enlarge upon the Beauties of them, but content myself with saying only, that they were the first Specimen of true Taste that ever were printed.

I must confess, by some these Songs were treated with great Indignity ; particularly at the University of C——, where I had many Subscribers. I suppose the Case to be thus : My Friends being desirous to hear them, they were exhibited at their weekly Concert, and there performed (I make no doubt) in the old jog-trot Manner, which could not fail of giving Disgust, rather than the least Degree of pleasing Sensation ; whereas, singing and playing my *Musick* alone is not sufficient ; it must be accompanied with some Gesticulation, and the Muscles of the Face must be nicely observant to contract or distend themselves in Frowns, Smiles, Leers, Languishings, &c. according to the different  
Motions



Motions felt within: By this means, I have seen an Audience most highly delighted when I have performed a Piece in this manner, which, if any other Man had sung or played, would have been thought quite flat and insipid: I shall therefore rank this among my greatest Excellencies, of which more hereafter. Had I been there to have given them Fair-play, to have performed them myself with the true Gusto, their Doom would have been reversed; and instead of their being inhumanly condemned to the Flames as they were, they would not only have been applauded, but also have been preserved, among the most valuable Works of Antiquity in their Archives. As to the other University, so much of the old Leaven remained there, that few or none subscribed; so that I am at a Loss to know what Reception they met with in that Place.

However, not in the least discouraged, I went on: being determined to push my Scheme of improving the Taste of the Country, and, if possible, to bring it to a proportionable

tionable Standard with that of the *Politeſſe* in *London*.

The next Performance I exhibited to the Public, was Six Solos, or rather Duettos (for one Part was as principal as the other) for a Violin and Violoncello. There was Taste and Judgment to Perfection ! but alas, their Misfortune, like my former Work, was, not to be understood : infomuch, that a certain \* Gentleman ſaid, if you turned the Book upſide down, and played the Baſs for the Treble ; nay, if a Baſs of *Corelli* were joined to a Treble of *Geminiani*, it would produce equally as good Harmony and Connexion. Now here 'tis plain he does not underſtand me ; for Harmony is not the Thing I value myſelf upon : and as to Connexion, if I can make two Parts agreeable, each in itſelf, a very little Relation one to the other is ſufficient. And then, as to Preparation, Reſolution, Modulation, &c. they have nothing to do with true Guſto ; any one, who diſbelieves it, may be ſatisfied, by peruſing the Works of the moſt

\* James Harris, *Eſq*; of Salisbury.

celebrated Moderns. For if Discords are to come and go, only when they are expected, the most beautiful Figure in *Music* is destroyed ; I mean the *Surprise*.

However meeting with this Rebuff, from a Man who is reputed to be a great Connoisseur, threw me partly into a Relapse : and soon after, I published professedly, an Imitation of an old-fashioned Piece of Composition \* : resolving (though it cost me infinite Pains, I must confess) to crave a Truce with (at least to sooth) these snarling Critics for a while : but the Fate of this Performance was still harder than the former ; my Subscription would not fill : so that this elaborate Piece could be known only within the Circle of those already my Patrons and Encouragers ; this answered no End whatever.

In the first place, I lost Money by it : in next, acquired no Reputation : My Friends and Admirers did not want to be convinced

\* A Hymn written by Dr. *Watts*, set to Music in the manner of *Milton's* Hymn of *Adam and Eve*, set by Mr. *Galliard*.



of my Abilities ; nor was this the Way to effect it, had that been the Case : being, as I said before, in a Style so different from what I had been so long inculcating. On the other hand, not being able to obtain Subscriptions, I was forced to hazard my Work in the Shops : partly in hopes of defraying the Expences of Engraving, Paper, Printing, &c. but, above all, that it might fall into the Hands of those who call themselves Judges (the principal Intention in publishing it.) This End was answered ; but with so little Success, that, instead of meeting with Approbation and Applause, I was loaded with the invidious Appellations of Trifler, Mimick, Pretender, scurvy Imitator, and the like. How ungrateful a Return was this to my friendly Design ! the Pangs I felt, are inconceivable. I raved — I wept — again I raved — again I wept — at length, Courage getting the better of Despondency, I vowed Revenge. Various Schemes immediately presented themselves to my View, (for I am, thank Heaven, blest with a most fertile Invention) some feasible, some otherwise ; some I cherished, and some rejected ; but still some Doubt or Perplexity

plexity arose to baffle my Design, and prevent my bringing it to Maturity, till at length I hit upon an infallible one; a Scheme that will be admired, when its Author is dead and rotten,

Hitherto the Business of Composing *Music* hath been chiefly in the Hands of Masters; but this admirable Scheme of mine will enable Gentlemen to make their own *Music*; and by a Method so easy, that a Child of Five Years may do it — as well as myself,

Any one must imagine so noble an Invention was not brought to Perfection in a Day, any more than *Rome* was built in that Time; no; it was a very laborious, toilsome Undertaking.

The End proposed, is one Thing; but the Means whereby to effect it, is another. Saying, I would teach the Nobility and Gentry to Compose *Music*, to the great Mortification of their Masters, was soon said: but finding out the Method, was a Work of great Labour and Difficulty.

The first Thing that occurred, was the *Lagado* \* : that wonderful Invention of the learned Professor mentioned in Captain *Gulliver's Travels* : which, with some little Alteration, might have fitted my Purpose extremely well, and which I could easily have got made, as now I live in a \*\* Place famous for mechanic Operations. But then, the Bulk of the Machine, and the Number of Hands required to work is, *viz.* Forty Pair at least, made it at best inconvenient ; and in many Cafes wholly impracticable. Otherwise, it would have been the prettiest Employment imaginable for those Ladies and Gentlemen who are remarkable for their Dexterity in cutting Paper, to have separated the Notes and Passages, and pasted them on the little Pieces of Wood : which you know is very like cutting out the Figures in coloured Prints, *viz.* Birds, Beasts, Flowers, Trees, Men, Women, Houses, &c. and pasting them on Cabinets and Dressing Boxes, then varnishing them over : this is the modern

\* So called from the Place where the Inventor lived.

\*\* About Ten Yerrs since the Author removed to



Art of Japanning ; and was the sole Amusement of the Polite of both Sexes for a considerable Time. However, for the above Reasons I dropt all Thoughts of the *Lagado*.

I then took into Consideration a Scheme proposed to the Royal Society, for writing down *Music* played *extempore* on a Harpsicord, or any such Instrument, by means of Pencils being fixed in the underside of the Keys, and a Barrel, or Roller, to turn round, having Lines ready ruled upon it, to receive the Marks which the Pencilt would make thereon ; and the Proportions of the Notes to be calculated according to the different Lengths of the Strokes. This might have done ; but then it was necessary to be a Musician (at least a Performer) before you could be a Composer ; for which reason I laid that aside.

The next Scheme that offered itself, was that of Signora *Gambarini* : of teaching the Proportions of harmonical Sounds, by the Pippes on Cards ; but considering this might

burthen the Memory of my Disciples, and that the old Lady might be angry at such an Infringement upon her Property, I rejected that also. Not but it would have taken me up some Time to have studied and discovered the manner in which it is done; for at present, I confess, I am wholly ignorant of it.

But, as the Foam on *Bucephalus's* Bit was better expressed by the Pencil thrown in Despair, than by all the Pains *Apelles* could bestow: and as the noblest Inventions have been owing to the slightest Accidents, so it happened with me. After I had taken an incredible deal of Pains, to little or no purpose, and almost despairing of Success, an Accident furnished me with a Hint, which hath made me ample amends.——Ample amends, I say, for if this does not give the *Coup de Grace* to all your old-fashioned Musicians, I am much mistaken.

Stepping one Day into my Bookbinder's Shop whilst he was at work, I stood some time and chatted with him: regarding but little of aught he did, till leaving me for a Minute,

Minute, going to one Corner of his Shop, and fetching from thence a Gallipot with a Brush in it: thinks I, what can this be for? I soon discovered, that the Use he applied it to, was to sprinkle the Edges of the Leaves, and (with some Variation) the Outside of the Covers, 'Twill do! 'Twill do! said I in the greatest Rapture imaginable! and directly flew out of the Shop.

[The Man told me afterwards, he thought me mad.]

Home I went, and immediately made me one of these Machines: which for the future I shall beg leave to call a *Spruzzarino*; not by that vulgar Name a Brush any longer. I made Experiment of my new Discovery, and found it answer, even beyond my Expectation. Before I give you thorough Directions in what manner to apply this Instrument, I shall beg leave to suggest a few Things as being absolutely necessary to be observed, in order to make a right Use of it.

First, It will be proper you should be acquainted with the different Fashions and Make  
of



of the Blackheaded Notes ; for open ones have long since been laid aside with the Idea annexed to them ; except in Cathedrals, and I hope they will soon be banished thence : for their Music was so unintelligible in my Time, that I never could understand or execute any of it ; except a few of Dr. G——n's Anthems, Crotchets, Quavers, Semiquavers, and Demi-semiquavers, are the only Notes Music ought to appear in ; unless when we affect to look like our Great-grand-fathers : these therefore you must be able to mark with your Pen. I presume, most Folk can write, at some rate or other ; it matters not, how indifferently or ungracefully, since it is properly the Business of some Underling to transcribe our Works fairly and legibly. In a word, the Three first Pages of an Eighteenpenny Book (which any Shop can furnish you with) will as fully instruct you in every thing necessary of this Sort, as if I were to write a Volume upon the Subject. I shall therefore confine my Instructions to Matters of greater Importance——such as relate to the Grand Scheme of Reformation.

As

As *Ligatures* and *Bindings* are grown obsolete, avoid them on all Occasions.

Never think of the Key or Tone, Time, or Measure, till you have applied the *Spruzzarino*: the Disposition of the Spots will then prompt you to determine both, according as they are situated, or as they seem inclined to fall in with Common or Triple Measure. If there should happen to be any supernumerary Notes, call them *Apogiaturas*, *Acciaccaturas*, or what you please; provided it be *Italian*.

As to Quick and Slow Movements, no particular Disposition is required: either with respect to Measure or Modulation; the Technical *Italian* Words do all.

If a Discord fall on the first (or other) Part of the Bar, which is accented, without any previous Notice, never reject it; for therein consists one of the greatest Beauties of modern Composition.

As the *Spruzzarino* will not make Flats, or Sharps, you are to place them, where you think

think they will look best: no matter as to Propriety; the more odd, the more new and unexpected.

Avoid (as much as possible) any great Variety in the Bass Part; for this is truly *Italian*. But if you are unavoidably led to make that the Principal, and you intend the Piece for the Harpsicord, place Chords over it, in the manner of Thorough-Bass: if they happen not to be agreeable to the Harmony or Modulation, so you put Notes enough in, little Irregularities will be construed masterly Liberties, which we great Men are allowed to take.

It frequently will happen, that the Spots will form a Passage like some favourite Air of another Author: I can see no Reason why such a Passage should be rejected. Would a Poet reject a Couplet, a Verse, or even a Thought of *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Pope*, or *Dryden*, that fell in pat with his Subject? by no means; it is rather looked upon as an Illustration; a Specimen of his Reading. Indeed the Poets have one great Advantage over us Musicians, which I have often envied them; 'tis only placing



placing the reversed Commas at the Beginning of the Verses, and they may cite as long they please; no one will charge them with Plagiarism; we have no such Marks of Distinction.

Having given you these necessary Precautions to prevent your running into the old Style, I shall proceed to instruct you in the Use of the *Spruzzarino*, and to give such Directions, as will enable you to make a shining Figure in the new; which shall be done in the most concise Form and Manner.

*The Art of composing Music in the New-Style.*

Take a Gallipot, put therein Ink of what Colour you please; lay a Sheet of ruled Paper on your Harpsicord or Table; then dip the *Spruzzarino* into the Gallipot; when you take it out again shake off the superfluous Liquid; then take the fibrous or hairy Part betwixt the Fore-finger and Thumb of your Left-hand, pressing them close together, and hold it to the Lines and Spaces you intend to sprinkle; then draw the Fore-finger of your Right-hand gently over the Ends thereof, and you will see a Multiplicity of Spots on the Paper; this repeat as often as you have

think they will look best: no matter as to Propriety; the more odd, the more new and unexpected.

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have Occasion, still beginning where you left off. This done, read very carefully over the Rules and Directions above ; and then take your Pen and proceed to the placing the Cliffs or Keys at the Beginning, marking the Bars, and forming the Spots into Crotchets, Quavers, &c. as your Fancy shall prompt you, first the Treble, then the Bass ; observing a proportionable Quantity in the latter to suit with the former ; this done, season it with Flats and Sharps to your Taste.

It may be objected, that Ink is a nasty Thing and will daub the Fingers ; but those who are used to Intrigue will quickly remove this Objection, by suggesting the many Ways of writing secret Letters to deceive Fathers, Uncles, Guardians, &c. For Instance, use Lemon-juice instead of Ink, and nothing will appear but one entire Blank ; hold it to the Fire a Moment and every Stroke becomes visible. Now, every one knows Lemon-juice is so far from being a nasty Thing, that it is a great Cleanser ; and smells most agreeably.

After all, Competitors, Snarlers, Critics, &c. some through Envy, some Despair, may  
raise

raise Doubts concerning the Success of my Invention ; but I shall soon silence all such, by referring them to my Six Sets of Lessons, just now published, which I affirm to have been composed entirely by this Method, and are such as will stand the Test of Ages.

And now having finished all I had to say on the Article of composing *Music*, by my new invented Method, which no one will deny to be the easiest and best that ever appeared in Public [having obviated all Objections that can be made] I shall beg leave to draw a short and modest Comparison between those who have wrought such Wonders, and are styled the truly ancient Musicians, and myself, with which I shall conclude.

Writers on ancient *Music* tell us, that musical Sounds were not all in which a Performance of *Music* consisted ; but that, beside the Musician, there was one who recited, another (with Iron Shoes) who marked the Time or Measure, and a third who gesticulated. Now, if one Man plays, sings, beats Time (although he doth not wear Iron Shoes) and gesticulates, he may fairly be said to out-do



do the best of them——That Man am I. For what would have employed four different Performers among the Ancients, I do myself. I play, I sing, I beat Time, and am my own Gesticulator; consequently a greater Man than even *Orpheus* himself, who was at best a Harper.

*Advertisement,*

Having lately published a Book of Psalmody, and recommended it to the Parish Clerks of *Great Britain*, by circular Letters, written with a great Spirit of Devotion and Piety, I cannot let slip so favourable an Opportunity of recommending it likewise to those pious Matrons who have the Care of Children, for the Use of the several Nurseries where they preside; not only as these Compositions are proper to lull Infants pleasingly to repose, but also to give them as early an Impression as possible of divine Words and Music. Reader, farewell. I am, with Thanks for all Indulgences,

*Your most obsequious,*

*Most obliged*

*And most humble Servant,*

BAR—G—N,

Organist, P—t M—r, and Box-maker, at B—m.